

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 9-74 are now pending in the application. By this paper, Claims 1, 23, 26, 50, and 72-74 have been amended and Claims 5-8 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. The basis for these amendments can be found throughout the specification, claims, and drawings originally filed. No new matter has been added. The preceding amendments and the following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action and are believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claims 8, 23, 26, 73, and 74 stand objected to for various informalities. Applicants have amended each of Claims 8, 23, 26, 73, and 74 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions, and therefore respectfully submit that Claims 8, 23, 26, 73, and 74 are in condition for allowance. Applicants note that because the amendments to Claims 8, 23, 26, 73, and 74 were made to correct typographical errors, such amendments are non-narrowing amendments. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 5-7, 9-13, 16, 19, 21, 22, 50, and 72 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fukano (JP 63-141750). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is moot with respect to independent Claims 1, 50, and 72, as each of Claims 1, 50, and 72 have been amended to include the identified allowable subject matter of Claim 8. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Because independent Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance in light of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 5-7, 9-13, 16, 19, 21, and 22, dependent therefrom, are similarly in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukano in view of Scardovi (U.S. Pat. No. 4,695,852).

Claims 14, 15, 17, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukano.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As noted above, independent Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the identified allowable subject matter of Claim 8. Because each of Claims 2-4, 14, 15, 17, and 20 dependent from independent Claim 1, Claims 2-4, 14, 15, 17, and 20 are similarly believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

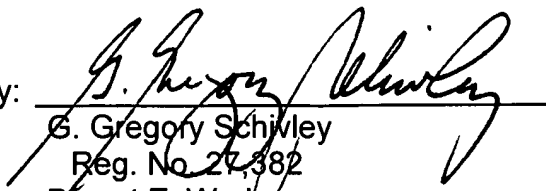
Applicants acknowledge the allowance of Claims 23-49, 51-71, 73, and 74. Applicants also acknowledge that Claims 8 and 18 contain allowable subject matter. As noted above, Applicants have amended each of independent Claims 1, 50, and 72 to incorporate the identified allowable subject matter of Claim 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 50, and 72, as well as Claims 2-4 and 9-22, respectively dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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